

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5           1.       An emergency signaling device for an automobile having a trunk including a trunk opening and a trunk lid hinged to move between a closed position for enclosing the trunk opening and an opened position for providing access to the trunk via the trunk opening, comprising:  
a substrate, disposed in the trunk of the automobile, the substrate for folding between  
10           a folded position when the trunk lid is in the closed position and an extended position when the trunk lid is in the opened position; and  
indicia disposed on the substrate for conveying a message when the substrate is unfolded to the extended position,  
wherein, when the substrate is in the extended position, the indicia disposed on the  
15           substrate are positioned so as to be generally visible to motorists approaching the automobile.
- 20           2.       The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the indicia comprise at least one light disposed on the substrate.
3.       The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the at least one light comprises a light emitting diode.
4.       The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 3, further  
25           comprising a power supply for providing electrical power to the light emitting diode.
5.       The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 4, wherein the power supply comprises a battery coupled to the substrate.

6. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 5, wherein the automobile includes an electrical system, and wherein the battery is charged from the electrical system.

5 7. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 4, wherein the automobile comprises an electrical system and the power supply receives power from the electrical system.

8. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the  
10 indicia comprise reflective material disposed on the substrate.

9. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the substrate is flexible.

15 10. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the substrate is removable from the trunk of the automobile for use at a location remote from the automobile.

11. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the  
20 automobile further comprises a hazard flasher system for flashing lights disposed on the automobile when the hazard flasher system is turned on and a remote trunk release for causing the trunk lid to move to the opened position, and wherein the substrate is unfolded to the extended position when the remote trunk release causes the trunk lid to move to the opened position while the hazard flasher system is on.

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12. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 11, wherein the substrate remains folded in the folded position when the remote trunk release causes the trunk lid to move to the opened position while the hazard flasher system is off.

13. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the substrate further comprises fasteners for fastening the substrate to the trunk lid and within the trunk for unfolding the substrate to the extended position when the trunk lid is in the opened position.

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14. An emergency signaling device, comprising:  
a flexible substrate foldable between at least a folded position and an unfolded position; and  
a plurality of lights disposed on the flexible substrate forming indicia for displaying a  
10 message;  
wherein the flexible substrate is folded to the folded state for storage and unfolded to the unfolded state for display of the message.

15. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the  
15 plurality of lights comprise light emitting diodes.

16. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 15, further comprising a power supply for providing electrical power to the light emitting diodes.

20 17. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 16, wherein the power supply comprises a battery coupled to the substrate.

18. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 17, wherein the battery is charged from an automobile electrical system.

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19. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 14, wherein the indicia further comprise reflective material disposed on the substrate.

20. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 14, wherein the flexible substrate is storable in a trunk of an automobile and is removable from the trunk of the automobile for use at a location remote from the automobile.

5 21. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 14, wherein the trunk comprises a trunk lid, and wherein the flexible substrate further comprises fasteners for fastening the substrate to the trunk lid and within the trunk for unfolding the substrate to the extended position when the trunk lid is in an opened position.

10 22. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 21, further comprising a power supply for powering the plurality of lights, wherein the automobile comprises an electrical system, the power supply receiving electrical power from the electrical system.

15 23. An emergency signaling device for a vehicle, comprising:  
a substrate for being disposed in the vehicle, the substrate folding between a folded position and an extended position; and  
indicia disposed on the substrate for conveying a message when the substrate is unfolded to the extended position,  
20 wherein, when the substrate is in the extended position, the indicia disposed on the substrate are positioned so as to be visible to motorists generally approaching the vehicle.

24. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 23, wherein the  
25 indicia comprise at least one light disposed on the substrate.

25. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 24, wherein the at least one light comprises a light emitting diode.

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26. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 24, further comprising a power supply for providing electrical power to the light.

27. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 26, wherein the  
5 power supply comprises a battery coupled to the substrate.

28. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 27, wherein the vehicle includes an electrical system, and wherein the battery is charged from the electrical system.

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29. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 26, wherein the vehicle comprises an electrical system and the power supply receives power from the electrical system.

15 30. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 24, wherein the indicia comprise reflective material disposed on the substrate.

31. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 24, wherein the substrate is flexible.

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32. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 24, wherein the substrate is removable from the vehicle for use at a location remote from the automobile.

25 33. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 24, wherein the automobile further comprises a hazard flasher system for flashing lights disposed on the automobile when the hazard flasher system is turned on and a remote trunk release for causing the trunk lid to move to the opened position, and wherein the

substrate is unfolded to the extended position when the remote trunk release causes the trunk lid to move to the opened position while the hazard flasher system is on.

34. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 33, wherein the  
5 substrate remains folded in the folded position when the remote trunk release causes the trunk lid to move to the opened position while the hazard flasher system is off.

35. The emergency signaling device as claimed in claim 24, wherein the  
substrate further comprises fasteners for fastening the substrate to the trunk lid and  
10 within the trunk for unfolding the substrate to the extended position when the trunk lid is in the opened position.

36. An emergency signaling device for an automobile having a trunk  
including a trunk opening and a trunk lid hinged to move between a closed position  
15 for enclosing the trunk opening and an opened position for providing access to the trunk via the trunk opening, comprising:

means, disposed in the trunk of the automobile, for folding between a folded position  
when the trunk lid is in the closed position and an extended position when the  
trunk lid is in the opened position; and

20 means, disposed on the folding means, for conveying a message when the folding  
means is in the extended position,

wherein, when the folding means is in the extended position, the message conveying  
means disposed on the folding means is positioned so as to be generally  
viewable from behind the automobile.

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